

## Schiphol . . . . .

to New York, Curacao, Natal, Rio de Janeiro and Montevideo. On scheduled transatlantic and inter-Continental routes, 64 Constellations or Douglas DC-6s and DC-4s take off each week for one of those distant destinations. Passenger and freight figures at Schiphol for 1948 were:—

	Europe	Transatlantic Inter-Continental	Domestic
Passengers . . . . .	144,346	41,232	34,455
Freight (tons) . . . . .	2,650	1,140	900
Mail (tons) . . . . .	757	570	—

During 1947 604,200 people visited the airport, and this year 500,000 had visited it by August 10th.

Behind this truly outstanding post-war recovery, and at the head of negotiations for future planning, is an air-minded municipality supported by the Government and spurred on by the rapidly expanding national airline, K.L.M., which is, of course, very closely connected with and consulted in the plans for developing the airport. There is one personality, however, who is the co-ordinator and enthusiast behind the scheme. He is the Airport

Manager, Mr. U. F. M. Dellaert, who has served at Schiphol for 28 years. He was a military pilot from 1916 to 1920 with Dr. Albert Plesman, with whom he went to K.L.M. after the war, in the days when Schiphol was first being used for civil purposes. He is behind the long-term plans already mentioned, which the Municipality and the Government Aeronautical Service together have produced in detail; it now only remains for the Municipality Council and the Minister to agree to them. The present interim scheme will then become part of the whole, and eventually this north-east corner of the dried-up lake will become the technical site, while passenger-handling will be conducted from very much larger premises, probably in the centre of the runway system.

While it is not possible to forecast for certain what system will eventually be adopted, it seemed probable from our own observations that a tangential pattern was favoured. It is certain that such a scheme could be developed from the present layout, and extensions could be made in the north-westerly direction. Total cost for the eventual plan will be some £15 million, and when it is completed in ten years' time Holland will undoubtedly have a vast, fully equipped modern airport capable of taking the largest contemporary aircraft at reasonable frequencies.

## PRESTWICK CRASH INVESTIGATION

THE Minister of Civil Aviation has appointed Mr. Thomas Pringle McDonald, K.C., to hold a Court Investigation into the accident to the K.L.M. Constellation which occurred near Prestwick on the night of October 20th. This investigation is to be held in the Sheriff Court House, County Buildings, Ayr, and will begin on January 10th, 1949. Capt. Frost, B.O.A.C., has been appointed Assessor, and the case will be presented by a Scottish lawyer on behalf of the Crown Agents, the Scottish counterpart of the Treasury Solicitor.

## MALTA'S PRIVATELY OWNED AIRLINE

AFTER two and a half years of pioneer work in civil aviation in Malta, an official licence has been granted to Air Malta, Ltd., authorizing them to operate scheduled airline services between Malta and North Africa and Sicily, and also a scheduled stopping service between Malta and Rome. This is the first licence of its kind to be issued to a private aviation company in Malta not operating in association with one of the British nationalized airways; Malta Airways, Ltd., to which reference was made in *Flight*, November 25th, is an associate of B.E.A.

Air Malta came into being in May, 1947, as a result of a merger of three companies which had been operating aircraft from the Island since early 1946. The first of these companies, British Aviation Services (Malta) Ltd., was formed as a subsidiary to British Aviation Services, London, to handle and service private aircraft passing through Malta, and also to charter aircraft from the U.K., thus enabling passengers wishing to travel from Malta to do so without having to obtain high Government priority which was at that time necessary. Shortly after the formation of British Aviation Services, a second company, Instone Airlines 1946 (Malta) Ltd., was formed to help deal with the passenger congestion then prevailing in Malta. The third company, Chartair, Ltd., in November, 1947, sent aircraft to Malta, for the use of Instone Airlines and to work side by side with aircraft which British Aviation Services had then based at Luca. The object of these companies was to establish services on a charter basis for flights from Malta to the surrounding cities, chiefly Rome, Naples, Catania, Palermo, Tunis and Tripoli. Owing to the amount of public support which these charter companies received they were reorganized on a semi-scheduled basis, and since there were no other services available from the island, the Maltese Government permitted them to continue until such time as a licence could be issued.

In 1947 the three companies were formed into one unit under the name "Maltairline," and applications for licences to run services were made to the Italian and British Governments. Since the original applications were made Air Malta, Ltd., the company formed from the merger of the three companies, has carried over 10,000 passengers, flown approximately 4,000 hours, and covered a distance of 520,000 miles. In addition 120,000 lb of freight and 10,000 lb of mail have been handled.

The company has found it extremely difficult to purchase new feeder aircraft, and says that up to date no suitable model has been found with a seating capacity of eight to ten persons

which in the company's opinion has an economical running cost. However, the management is at the moment considering purchases of the Dove or the Prince, and are watching the performance figures of these aircraft with other airlines. Since Air Malta is a privately owned company running entirely without grants or subsidies, it is of paramount importance that any aircraft purchased should be an economical proposition. Aircraft such as the Viking are not considered suitable in view of the short distances of the routes operated, for which the Viking's operational costs would, they consider, be high. Until such time as new aircraft are purchased, Air Malta will continue to use the Airspeed Consul, which they have found reliable and satisfactory.

## AMALGAMATION OF BLACKBURNS AND GENERAL AIRCRAFT

FOLLOWING the amalgamation of General Aircraft, Ltd., and Blackburn Aircraft, Ltd., announced in *Flight*, December 2nd, the names of the companies will be changed: General Aircraft becomes Hanworth Securities, Ltd., and Blackburn Aircraft, Ltd., becomes Blackburn and General Aircraft, Ltd. General Aircraft production at present in hand at Hanworth will be completed there and it is therefore impossible to say when production will finally be centralized at Brough. When this does occur, however, some redundancy is likely to arise at Feltham and it is expected that from February, 1949, there will be progressive releases of work people from Feltham. The Ministry of Labour, the company and the appropriate trade union organizations and shop stewards are formulating plans to find alternative employment for the people released. Among the other objects of the amalgamation scheme aimed at are a combination of the best administrative technical and production ability of both companies in a single undertaking. Furthermore, by transferring the aircraft production to Brough a step will be taken to reduce undesirable concentration of the aircraft industry in the London area. The Minister of Supply is said to be in general agreement with these objects of the scheme. In any case inadequate airfield facilities at Hanworth would have rendered necessary the transfer of General Aircraft, Ltd., airframe production in the near future.

In an address to be made at the annual general meeting of Blackburn Aircraft, Ltd., on December 20th reference is made to the reorganization of the Board of Directors. It is proposed that Mr. H. V. Gort, managing director of General Aircraft, Ltd., should become a director of Blackburn and General Aircraft, Ltd., and it is further proposed that Mr. Gort and Capt. M. W. G. Blackburn should become joint managing directors in place of Mr. R. Blackburn and Major Bumpus. It is expected that these changes will be effective as from January 1st, 1949. Such an arrangement, however, involves a breach of the contract between Blackburn Aircraft, Ltd., and Mr. R. Blackburn and, in these circumstances, a resolution for the payment of £12,500 representing approximately the salary and estimated commission on profits for one year which Mr. Blackburn would be entitled to draw under his agreement, is to be submitted to the members for their approval. Though Mr. R. Blackburn will no longer be joint managing director he will remain on the Board as Chairman of the new company.